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SALT TWO  
SESSION I  
A-116

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION  
U.S. SALT DELEGATION  
GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

DATE: December 19, 1972

TIME: 7:30 to 8:00 p.m.

PLACE: Hotel des Eaux-Vives  
Geneva

SUBJECT: SALT: Qualitative Limitations

PARTICIPANTS: US USSR

Dr. Raymond L. Garthoff

Academician A. N. Shchukin

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Shchukin drew me aside for a conversation on qualitative limitations in SALT. He began, apparently hastily on the chance that our conversation might be brief, by saying bluntly that the idea of qualitative limitations through a quota strictly limiting the number of missile flight tests was not an idea worth pursuing. I asked why he thought it was not. He replied that the US was so far in advance of the Soviet Union in developing MIRVs, and in particular in MIRV flight tests, that it would be inequitable and unacceptable to the Soviet side to limit itself to a small number of missile tests per year. The US would not be comparably affected, since it has already developed MIRV systems. Shchukin then said that the key factor in future improvement was accuracy. I agreed that this was a particularly important factor, but not the only one. Assuming MIRVs were being developed and deployed, the US could not ignore the greater long term potential for MIRVing presented by the Soviet heavy ICBM force. Shchukin acknowledged this, and said that he understood very well why we had advanced our considerations on controlling throw-weight. However, this was looking at only one part of the picture, and evidently assumed no limitation on MIRVs.

Shchukin then observed that there were logically three possible ways of dealing with the MIRV problem. First would be no limitations or constraints. The other extreme would be a total MIRV ban on both sides. The third possibility was a range of conceivable limitations on MIRVs short of banning them. The first course was, of course, a possible outcome. A complete ban Shchukin regarded as out of the question, on both

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sides, for different reasons. The middle range of possible limitations therefore deserved our closest attention, since it would clearly be desirable if some kind of MIRV limitations could be agreed upon.

Shchukin then suggested the possibility of leveling off without exploiting full potential for MIRVing on both sides. I agreed that it was desirable to seek some kind of MIRV limitation. I questioned, however, how one could effect the kind of limitation which Shchukin seemed to be suggesting in a verifiable manner. Shchukin argued that the important thing was first to consider possible limitations, and only then turn to questions of verification. I questioned whether it was realistic to attempt to consider limitations without at the same time examining their feasibility from the standpoint of verification, as well as in other respects. Shchukin admitted that there would be difficulties in verification but repeated strongly that the most important thing was to begin discussion of possible limitations, and then seek ways to deal with difficulties of implementation and verification. He agreed that these were very important problems, and that they would have to be resolved before there could be any agreement on limitation. But it was important to get underway a discourse between the two sides on the subject of possible MIRV limitations.

At about this time, Dr. Brown joined us, and I departed.

*RLG*  
SALDEL/EXO:RLGarthoff/res  
December 20, 1972

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